

Persecution of Iranian Christians Intensifies: 2 Women Refuse to Renounce Faith

<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=3756>

At the recommendation of the **United States Commission on International Religious Freedom**, the State Department has designated Iran a “country of particular concern” because of its egregious violations of religious freedom. Only 0.02% of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s 66 million people are Catholic, and they, like other minority religious groups, suffer pervasive discrimination and government monitoring of religious activities. It is illegal for Christians to evangelize Muslims, and the conversion of Muslims to Christianity and other religions is punishable by death. According to the State Department, “Christians, particularly evangelicals, continued to be subject to harassment and close surveillance ... The government [has] vigilantly enforced its prohibition on proselytizing by closely monitoring the activities of evangelical Christians, discouraging Muslims from entering church premises, closing their churches, and arresting Christian converts.”